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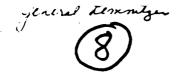
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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WASHINGTON 25, D.C.



5 April 1962

SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL TAYLOR
SPECIAL GROUP (AUGMENTED)

From: Brig. Gen. Lansdale

Subject: Operation Mongoose

For the information of the members of the Special Group (Augmented), the following are highlights of current matters in Operation Monguose reported to me:

L

Trial. The trial of the Playa Giron prisoners has ended, according to Havana Radio, with the sentences to be announced at a later date. CIA has accepted the figure of 1,182 prisoners. The trial prosecutor reportedly asked for sentences of death or 20-years at hard labor.

The US-resident families of the prisoners decided not to go to Cuba, according to the State Department.

"Food for Prisoners." At the 29 March Special Group (Augmented) meeting, State was tasked with ascertaining if a deal could be made with Castro on the prisoners, in return for food from private charitable organisations. Dick Goodwin has reported that State is still trying to find an emissary. The Australian government turned it down. The Italian delegate to the UN has received approval from Reme to act as an emissary, at 1145 this morning, according to the State Department.

Clemency. Dick Goedwin reported that Goulart received a reply from President Dortices of Cuba and informed the White House yesterday; in effect, Dortices politely noted Goulart's appeal for Cuban elemency. State had prompted appeals from other governments, notably Mexico and Canada, as well as an OAS resolution. CIA contacts in Latin American countries were also applied to this goal of appeals for fair trial of the prisoners. (See CIA progress report SC No. 03599/62 of 4 April 1962.)

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Information. Den Wilson reports that USIA has handled the trial as the top news story, except for yesterday when Gaulart's visit took over with background staries, governmental and editorial reactions in the Western Hemisphere. Ten USIA posts attempted to get local journalists to attend the trial; only Guaternals and Trinidad sent requests to Cuba, which were turned down. Cabans in Minmi generally were unwilling to be interviewed by VOA; only two interviews were played. Current play is now being given to Castro's speech containing played. Current play is now being given to Castro's speech containing elurring remarks about Latin American leaders.

II.

Program Reports. CIA is issuing a special progress report of its activities in connection with Operation Mengeses. Since Mr. McCone directed this means of keeping the Special Group (Augmented) informedit of CIA efforts, we are confronted with the problem of security and arranging for proper reporting of all Departments and Agencies on the Operations Mengeses team. If CIA activities are to be reported separately. Operations Mengeses team. If CIA activities are to be reported separately, then I propose to ask the others (State, Defence, USIA) to proper similar reports directly to the members of the Special Group, with an agreement of the reporting date being the same for all. I further plan then to make a composite report to the Special Group (Augmented) at least every two weeks, with due recognition to the separate reports which have been submitted by the several Departments and Agencies. If separate reporting is to be continued, then I would underscore hearily that security means for handling these reports must be tightened.

There are seens developments, in areas such as Defense support of CIA, which should be brought to the attention of the Special Group (Augmented). If you wish, I will be prepared to report on this at your next mosting.

Distributions

Mr. McCone, CIA

Mr. Johnson, State

Mr. Gilpatrie, Defense

The Atterney General

Mr. McGeorge Bundy

General Lemniner